

Doers and their doings

By P. F. Strawson

DONALD DAVIDSON:
Essays on Actions and Events
304pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
University Press. £14.

In the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein says that the best he has been able to produce is a series of philosophical remarks in which "the same or almost the same points are always being approached afresh from different directions". Donald Davidson too, in this collection of fourteen previously published essays, constantly approaches the same points afresh from different directions. So far, there is a resemblance. But the difference is greater than the resemblance. Where Wittgenstein eschews explicit theory, Davidson embraces it. Each essay is strictly argued and the whole collection forms a tightly interlocking set of theoretical positions in metaphysics and the philosophy of mind.

Fundamental philosophy is always marked by a distinctive combination of complexity and simplicity: complexity of detail and of argument, and simplicity of the governing ideas, of essential structure or underlying picture. Much of the difficulty of the subject consists in the fact that it is impossible to appreciate the force, or to estimate the soundness, of the governing ideas without attention to the detail of the argument. It is by dint of picking at the detail that some structures are brought tumbling down and others revealed as not merely banal—or merely big game—as they may at first have appeared.

One central Davidsonian thesis is that there are, or occur in nature, particular individual events; that such events are an irreducible part of our ontology. This is a thesis, or platitude, which may scarcely seem to need such generous support, by way of argument and illustration, as Davidson supplies; in any case, it is the firm basis upon which the rest of the structure rests. Included among particular events are those attributed as doings, to people; and among doings a certain class are dignified as "actions". Now every event, and hence every doing, has a multitude of properties or aspects; and a doing is an action if and only if it

is intentional, on the part of the doer, in respect of at least one of its aspects or, as Davidson prefers to put it, "under some description". Every action, in its intentional aspect, is believed by the agent to answer to some desire or concern of his, and in so far as it is performed because of such a particular combination of belief and desire, it is, again in its intentional aspect, explained ("rationalized") by that combination. The "because" is causal. Reasons for action, when efficacious, are causes.

Actions not only have, but are, causes; and, as causes of further events, they acquire further properties, or aspects, of their own. A stabbing may cause a death which is a distinct event, perhaps widely separated in time, from the stabbing; but since the stabbing caused the death, the stabbing itself, the very same event, acquires the character and title of a killing. The stabbing caused the death, but it did not cause the killing. It was the killing. The apparent paradox that the killing was over before the death occurred is easily resolved: though we could not definitely know that the action had been a killing before the death occurred, the victim might foresee his fate and say, with perfect truth though less than perfect knowledge, "You have killed me".

Reference to the multi-properied character of one and the same event, to the fact that the same action may fall under many different descriptions, in respect of only some of which it is an intentional action, naturally leads to a demand for a principle, or criterion, of identity for events. Davidson supplies one: an event *a* is identical with an event *b* if and only if all the causes (effects) of *a* (*b*) are also causes (effects) of *b* (*a*). I.e., if *a* and *b* have the same causes and effects. As a simple consequence of the logic of identity, this answer is hardly illuminating. But the fact that Davidson gives it reflects, or illuminates, the central position which the concept of cause occupies in the structure of his ideas.

Davidson sees the predicate "caused" as a straightforwardly extensional two-place predicate of particular events. That is, if it is true to say of a particular event, *c*, that it caused another particular event, *d*, then the truth of the statement in no way depends on the choice of descriptions of *c* and *d*. Any pair of correct descriptions of the events can be substituted for any other pair without change of truth-value. It is indeed implied by such a statement that there are some descriptions of *c* and *d* such that, under those descriptions, the statement that *c* caused *d* instantiates a (strict) law. If we know what the law is, and that *c* and *d*, appropriately described, instantiate it, then we have more than knowledge of a singular causal truth; we have an explanation. But we can know the singular causal truth without an explanation; and we may have an explanation without knowing the law.

These views on the relations of cause, law and explanation are essential to the development of Davidson's doctrine of the relations of the mental and the physical. He maintains, and it will scarcely be disputed, that some mental events are causes of some physical events and vice versa: a *s*, desire and belief move to action, hence to bodily movement; belief-formation results from perception, hence from physical stimulation.

He maintains also, as mentioned above, that every causal relation implies the existence of a strict law which, under some description of its terms, the relation instantiates; but that there are no strict laws relating events described in the mental vocabulary to events described in the physical vocabulary, whereas there are strict physical laws; whence he concludes that every event which both enters into causal relations with the physical and has a mental description has also a physical description, i.e. is identical with some physical event. This is the doctrine of "anomalous monism". It is distinguished from "anomalous" from more familiar theses of the identity of mental with physical events, by the rejection of the idea of general, type-to-type, correlations of the mental and the physical; for if this idea were accepted, the notion of "anomalous" psycho-physical laws would be reinstated and a necessary premise of the Davidsonian argument for the identity thesis would be lost. In that argument the "anomalousness" is essential to the "monism".

Davidson's principal reason for rejecting the notion of strict psycho-physical laws relates to the explanation of action. We can indeed interpret people's behaviour, explain their intentional actions, by reference to their reasons, their beliefs and concerns; and such explanations are causal. But these, our schemes of psychological explanation of behaviour, though both generally adequate and certainly indispensable, are in principle resistant to incorporation in systems of strict law. Yet strict law there must be where there are causes; and only the physical system can supply it. Hence, once more, the identity conclusion.

The argument clearly pivots on the notion of "cause". The psychological states which rationalize an action could not explain it unless they caused it; and they could not cause it unless the causally related items fell, under some description, under a strict, hence a physical, law. But the two-step inference from explanation to strict law via the notion of cause, seems shaky since the terms of the admittedly adequate and indispensable explanations are, by hypothesis, not the terms of strict law. Which link, if either, should we query? We could allow either that reasons can be efficacious without being causes or that not all causes have a backing of strict law. I incline to the latter alternative. In either case we avoid the identity conclusion while conceding all but one of the premises. In avoiding the identity conclusion, we need not deny that every mental state or event has, in the current innocuous jargon, a physical "realization" upon which it is "supervenient" (a point which Davidson insists on, while denying psycho-physical law). But we do well to avoid the explicit identity conclusion if we can, since it is too difficult to reconcile with the irreducibly subjective character of conscious experience—a feature to which Davidson alludes but which he seems, surprisingly, to regard as of little import.

The topic of event-identity in general deserves further consideration. Davidson's arguments to the effect that, e.g., an action of stabbing may be identical with an action of killing, an act of button-pressing identical with an act of ship-launching etc. are, I think, conclusive. The causal consequences of an act may confer upon that very same

act a character unrecorded in its more rudimentary descriptions. Nor, as Davidson notes, is the multiproperied nature of acts a matter of causal consequences alone. The social and physical context of a performance may similarly enrich its character: so an action of writing one's name on a piece of paper may be identical with an action of signing a legal document, which may in turn be identical with an action of assuming a grave responsibility. It is a curiously noteworthy fact that in common speech we rarely, if ever, express such identities as these in the explicit language of identity, i.e. by using the terms "the same" or "identical". We make use, rather, of such constructions as "By (or in) x-ing he p-ed (or was y-ing)": thus, "He killed him by stabbing him". "Is signing, he was assuming a grave responsibility". It is more than an illustration of the fact that metaphysically interesting truths are often not (and perhaps not often) reflected in a perspicuous way on the surface of common language?

Well, it is at least that. But it may be a little more. When, in common speech, we do use the explicit language of identity in speaking of events, the different event-descriptions with reference to which the question of identity arises will normally share a common expression for a *sort* or *kind* of event. Was the road-accident (wedding, fight) witnessed yesterday the very same road-accident (wedding, fight) as that which my colleagues were discussing at luncheon? Was the cry which woke me in the night the same as the cry which woke you? Davidson remarks, *en passant*, that individuation "is best" requires sorts or kinds that give a principle of identity and of counting. We may delete "at its best" and reflect that the coyness of common speech in its employment of the identity-concept, in relation to events, may after all be more revealing than obscuring: directly revealing in its manifest obelance to the sortal principle and indirectly so in thereby covertly emphasizing the distinctiveness of that feature of actions which Davidson so effectively brings out, viz. that one and the same action may properly be classified under headings which are not (as surely "a stabbing" and "a killing" are not) subordinate to a common sortal concept.

Further reflections ensue. The

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acknowledgment that additional descriptions accrue to an action because of its consequences or context seems to carry with it the requirement that the action should also fall under some basic or primitive description which makes no reference to these accretions. Davidson recognizes as much: all actions are "primitive" under some description and the description in each case will be simply a description of a bodily movement. Davidson gives "moving my finger" as an instance. His discussion at this point is a little confused. He writes:

It may be true that I cause my finger to move by contracting certain muscles, and possibly I cause the muscles to contract by making an event occur in my brain. But this does not show that pointing (i.e. moving) my finger is not a primitive action (i.e. an action primitive under this description), for it does not show that I must do something else which causes it. Doing something that causes me to move my finger; it is moving my finger.

But the reason given here is self-defeating since, by Davidson's own general arguments already referred to, it would allow every action to be described under every correct description of it; for to action, however described, causes itself, however described. So is Davidson reduced to saying that the agent's action is primitive only under some such description as "making the initial cerebral event occur" for he can and does introduce a requirement concerning the agent's knowledge of what he is, primitively, doing. But this requirement, though correct in principle, is somewhat uncertainly formulated.

Granted that sortal concepts are necessary to the individuation of events, including actions, as they are to the individuation of particular objects (substances), it must be added that event-sortals will generally be more complex than substance-sortals, and indeed will frequently have to include a reference to substance kinds. "Event" itself is not a sortal concept, nor is "change" or "action" or "bodily movement". Many nouns, derived from verbs, which may present themselves for sortal status are individuable of particular events only if considerably qualified: for instance, "fall" is not an event sortal, but an element in many "a fall of a leaf" is one, "a fall of a stone" another, "a fall of stones" a third; or, again, "an act of welding" is individuable only if qualified by, e.g., of a letter, "of a word" of a sentence. The contrast between substance-sortals and event-sortals is striking and revealing, even though, as Davidson rightly insists, it does not show that an ontology of events is any nearer being reducible or dispensable than an ontology of particular objects.

As earlier remarked, however, the obviousness of the truth that there are or occur events does not discourage Davidson from arguing in its favour. His principal argument links action-theory with truth-theory. He points out that many action-reporting sentences in which such a description as "making the initial cerebral event occur" appears for the agent and does introduce a requirement concerning the agent's knowledge of what he is, primitively, doing. But this requirement, though correct in principle, is somewhat uncertainly formulated.

Self-respect for all

By Jeremy Waldron

AMY GUTMAN:
Liberal Equality
318pp. Cambridge University Press.
£20 (paperback, £6.50).
0 521 22828 X
WILLIAM N. NELSON:
On Justifying Democracy
174pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£9.75.
0 7100 0635 5

In opting for a more equal society, the chances are that we have to accept restrictions on individual enterprise. But liberals should not be too concerned about this apparent threat to freedom. For the equality that is preserved by these restrictions may actually increase the overall amount of real freedom in the community. Freedom of choice is apt to seem a rather empty ideal to anyone so poor that he cannot exercise any real control over his life. To redistribute wealth in his favour, then, may be to bring him the real freedom for the very first time. In other words, to open up opportunities for genuine liberty that simply did not exist before.

Arguments like this are the familiar currency of liberal revisionism. They were canvassed in England a century ago, and formed the guts of the "New Deal" liberalism in America, and they are pretty much the orthodoxy (give or take a Friedman or a Nozick) of Anglo-American liberalism today. To say this is not to suggest that the arguments are invalid, or that the liberalists represent a decisive turn in Western ideology, and the recognition of their force is apt to seem something of a revelation to any hitherto unconvinced liberal. But if everyone who saw this particular light were to write a book to thank the occasion, the titles of liberal conversions would have overloaded the libraries long since. And the trouble with Amy Gutman's *Liberal Equality* is that it amounts in the end to little more than a dramatic re-statement of these familiar revisionist theses.

It is true that the implications of liberal egalitarianism are more radical in Gutman's hands than in those of her predecessors. There is no question about this. But the radicalism is not of a political or ideological kind, but of a moral kind, especially in its critique of capitalism and private property. Despite a veneer of liberalism, Gutman's book is a radical work. It is a work that is not only a critique of capitalism, but a critique of the liberal tradition itself. It is a work that is not only a critique of capitalism, but a critique of the liberal tradition itself. It is a work that is not only a critique of capitalism, but a critique of the liberal tradition itself.

I have two worries about this "great books" approach to political theory. First, any tour of the great books is bound to be selective. In Gutman's case, we hardly cross the Atlantic. The omission of Rousseau from the tour is especially notable. At the end of the book, Gutman suggests (quite plausibly) that Rousseau is the founder of a much more radical and liberal egalitarianism, and indeed a tradition which is qualified as constitutive of the liberal tradition. But if we take a full confrontation with liberty, her account in the final chapter of the differences between the two traditions is by far the most original. But what is the most original? But what is the most original? But what is the most original?

in virtue of structural or formal, rather than merely content features. If we construe such sentences as implicitly containing existential quantification over events, and correspondingly construe the relevant adverbial modifiers as predicates attached to the variables of quantification, then the formal principle of these inferences becomes immediately clear: they are validated by standard logic.

This illuminating observation is not consistently presented in the most disarming way. Davidson is apt to insist that a verb such as "stabs" in "Brutus stabs Caesar" is a three-place predicate with a third place for events, to be occupied by a variable bound by an existential quantifier. It would have been better, and would have saved some unnecessary perplexity, to have immediate recourse to nominalization and to say that the formal properties of such a clause are more perspicuously displayed by rewriting it as "There is an event which is a stabbing of Caesar by Brutus". Davidson implicitly admits as much when he replies, in effect, to a puzzled James Cargile that all he means by the first claim is satisfactorily expressed by the second.

By conclusion it must be said that this is one of the most impressive works of analytical philosophy to appear for a good many years. It is also one of the least casual. The positions adopted are argued for with an extraordinarily sustained seriousness and determination. Whether or not those positions win by adversarial phrases, the work will become, and deserves to become, a classic in its field.

At worst, it is offered as a substitute for argument, as though one could demonstrate a logical connection between liberty and equality, by exhibiting a series of increasingly egalitarian philosophers who happened to call themselves liberals.

History is used to much better effect in William Nelson's *Justifying Democracy*. Nelson devotes three chapters to theories of his predecessors: Schumpeter, Rawls, Arrow, Downs, and Buchanan and Tullock—not so they can do the job of justifying democracy for him, but so that he can show how they have managed to evade this task. His attack on recent "participatory" theories is especially interesting. Carole Pateman's *Participation and Democratic Theory*, for instance, is widely regarded as a corrective to the dull empiricism of Schumpeter et al.; it shifts the focus of democracy back into a normative gear. However, Nelson argues that Pateman's theory moves in a circle: democratic rule is desirable because it encourages popular participation; participation is desirable because it fosters the development of the active virtues; the active virtues are desirable because they contribute to the well-being of a participatory democracy. To break out of this circle, we have to ask why participatory rule is desirable—the whole package of institutions and attitudes—is desirable.

Nelson's own position turns out to be a reconstruction of John Stuart Mill's. Democracy is justified by its consequences: the laws and policies produced in a democracy are more likely to be good or right than those of any other system. Why should we believe this? Because democracy is government by necessity public or open government, and decisions taken in the open are more likely to be taken reasonably and justly, than decisions made in secret. The argument, Nelson emphasizes, is very much a "long run" case—the development of the active virtues in citizens the very existence of which makes for the reasonableness of its outcome—but it is the best case that can be made for our allegiance to democratic procedures in the mean time.

What, then, about the thing that worries most of us most of all—the prevalence in this country and elsewhere of covert and secret manipulation? Far from being a counter-example to Nelson's thesis, this tendency is a confirmation of it. In fact, for the job of a theory of democracy, it is not only a confirmation, but also a warning. It is a warning that democracy is not only a theory, but a practice. It is a warning that democracy is not only a theory, but a practice. It is a warning that democracy is not only a theory, but a practice.

Differential deserts

By Geoffrey Marshall

D. D. RAPHAEL:
Justice and Liberty
192pp. Athlone Press. £11.
0 485 11195 0

Justice and Liberty. D. D. Raphael notes, are the central concepts of social and political thought. That is fair enough, though in doubt some social theorists would want to throw in the concepts of class, alienation, revolution and similar fripperies. These essays do, however, cover a wider field than the title suggests. They deal with Justice, Equality, Law, Liberty, Rights and Utility. Though written over a period of about thirty years, they link well with each other and offer a series of approaches from different points of departure to these puzzlingly related topics. If one sees some difficulties at one point or another it is in large part because Professor Raphael, as always, wraps nothing up and himself exposes potential objections or alternative conclusions.

One conclusion hard to avoid is that most of these central concepts have at least two unsettled or rival usages. Equality is an obvious example. It wavers—or rather its users do—between the supposition that things described or distributed are equal when they are identical or uniform (as in equal amounts, numbers or incomes) and a different notion that distribution is unequal when it is based on irrelevant grounds or criteria (as when it is said that extra wartime milk rations for invalids would not constitute unequal treatment, but that more for those with large incomes or long noses would). The question then arises whether all discriminatory treatment that is based on morally satisfactory grounds is compatible with equality or whether only some is. It is argued in Raphael's discussion of Equality and Equity that the recognition of special needs, when justified, does not mean that equal treatment, but that the differential treatment of merits or deserts or special capacities does so depart. Quite apart from the difficulty of distinguishing between need and merit, meriting, and being entitled, there are a number of reasons why a general view is awkward to sustain. One of them being that it has not been adopted in more formal contexts, such as juridical expositions of the right to equal treatment.

This leads on to the relation between equality and justice. One sense of justice is clearly equivalent to the Equity sense of equality and perhaps also to the notion of fairness. In the chapter on Justice and Liberty, this sense of justice is presented as being a fusion of equity and desert, and it is argued that the ideological differences between political parties depend on differing interpretations of this concept. It is argued that the differences between political parties depend on differing interpretations of this concept. It is argued that the differences between political parties depend on differing interpretations of this concept.

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In other words justice will be done if a proper balance is struck between all competing rights such as those to equality, fairness, liberty, security and so on. In this sense justice would be a wider notion than fairness.

As well as analysing concepts, Raphael considers the work of three notable conceptualists—Rawls, Rawls and Dworkin (whose contributions, without entirely replacing those of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, have at least rounded off the twentieth-century end of the political thought syllabus, previously occupied rather unsatisfactorily by various Continental social theorists of more or less unbound mind).

In Rawls's theory of Justice there can clearly be a conflict of rights and justice is presumably done when their lexical ordering is correctly achieved. Raphael has some critical things to say about Rawls's principle that accords priority to liberty. He asks in particular what it means when applied and where it gets to at the end of the book.

Another of Raphael's chapters deals with some of the work of Ronald Dworkin. He finds Dworkin's criticism of the notion of legal rules as the main props in a theory of law convincing, but he is less persuaded by his anti-utilitarianism and by his exposition of the value of equality treated as meaning equality of concern or respect. He suggests that Dworkin neither explains sufficiently what concern and respect are nor why they should be handed out evenly. But something turns here on whether "equality" means "identically" or "equitably". Could any sense be attached, though, to the notion of identical amounts of respect?

In the three final chapters the discussion turns to the relations between rights and utility. One area in which these may come into conflict is the application of theories of (so called) "distributive justice". This issue is examined by way of a delineation of the factual background of the case of the *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* that raised the question of the discriminatory nature of the university's admissions quota. One argument here is that overall social advantage or utility may require the overriding of the merits or rights of those who would have secured admission or treatment in accordance with them. It is argued that the liberal who may have persuaded themselves that rights are individual claims that cannot (short of overwhelming necessity) be overborne by the collective interests of society can more easily be persuaded that rights are individual claims that cannot (short of overwhelming necessity) be overborne by the collective interests of society.

Possibly this may raise a doubt in the reader's mind whether it is quite as true as Raphael's preface suggests that the ideological differences between political parties depend on differing interpretations of this concept. It is argued that the differences between political parties depend on differing interpretations of this concept. It is argued that the differences between political parties depend on differing interpretations of this concept.

A curious bunch they are, these thinkers who have influenced him. Curious as a bunch rather than as individuals. The first is Whitehead, everywhere in the book. It is expected from a man of his generation who has the best of reasons for being a philosopher. For public recognition is one of the most powerful criteria of the truth, the ability to see a church by daylight being something, after all. In a profound sense, the truth is what we are able to see. If only we could be made to see it, Cowling's collection of material leaves no unasked. It is not only the disproportion of academics, one might say of Cambridge men; it is also the curious hedges of social policy suggested by the prominence of figures more or less acceptable in a fairly closed middle-class world, who in spite of their worthlessness and abilities, must be placed as less than first-rate by any standards. It is a pity that the book is not more fully provided with the theoretical basis for the analysis of Canterbury to approach the Anglican community as well as religious life, to another, as well as for

much more that eminent clerics get up to these days. Whitehead and Toynebe, we are told, were the baggage Cowling took in 1943 with rather oddity, it seems to me, for the time of day—scrapings of Bellor, Bergson, Shaw, Wordsworth, Macaulay and Carlyle.

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That the Christian religion, at any rate in its public manifestations, is in England as in other Western countries, is hardly deniable. There are those who deny it, to see improved private devotions as counterbalancing the overt decline, but they are rather like those who saw an increase in the importance of the field of study. It is certain that, unless Christianity has its own flourishing institutions, fewer and fewer people will find themselves in a position to know what that religion is. Not only have many individual places found a place within institutions, but the most recessed and fugitive devotions are strictly unthinkable without such institutions. Someone has to do the general view of the field, and the public doctrine of the Church of England is a question of institutions, and of a doctrine about England, much more explicit than anything that emerges from Cowling's first volume. The recession from Christianity, which is a necessary, not without a thought, the holders of accumulated capital has gone far since his day and has been widely welcomed. The universities and most schools have been completely secularized, or carry residual traces to faint as not to affect their general character. The rate of dissolution has been much accelerated by the media, now really the only institutions which have massive public influence, and which convert religion as well as political events, the arts, and all particular knowledge and expertise to the purposes of a power-riden entertainment world.

Edward Norman has spoken of the "withering away of the ecclesiastical past" and the "disappearance of the church" is evident enough; the question now is whether, under the influence of pseudo-populist conceptions (all populist conceptions are inevitably pseudo), the whole constitution is now being dissolved. The processes involved in this, too, may be sure of a wide welcome, though it does not follow that they will bring in an age of contentment.

There is a sense in which those well-established middle-class universities, Toynebe and Collingwood, may be said to have been prophetic in their general ideas which demoted the station of the station of a national Church, to which it is perhaps no longer called, its voice has acquired a sectarian strictness. It is now only vestigially more in

The English ideology

By C. H. Sisson

MAURICE COWLING:
Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England
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"People are fully alive to the danger of superstition in priests," wrote Lord Salisbury in 1876. In course of time they will find out that professors may be just as bad. They have found out; that much progress must be allowed to the past hundred years. The question whose prejudice is bigger than whose, of course, remains, not only as between professors and priests, but between members of these classes severally. It is revealed by Maurice Cowling in *Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England* that this "profoundly normative" back-biting goes on even among professional historians, and the whole of the book is a testament to the fact that the members of these classes severally, whose biographies provide a rich fringe of footnotes.

It is an extraordinary performance, and surely a laborious and somewhat inelegant way of establishing the existence, and the importance, of a field of study. It cannot but wish that Cowling had instead introduced his forthcoming history with a single essay in which he would have drawn the various strands from his authors into a statement of his own conclusions. What he is concerned with is a reaction to the realization that post or anti-Christian doctrine not only exists but has gained ascendancy. There must be people for whom this realization is a matter of establishment but they represent a somewhat modest level of apprehension of the public doctrine which has been propagated in England in the last century and a half. It cannot be said that the notion of a "public doctrine" has yet emerged with utter clarity. We are told it is something which "admirably" fits the framework, rather on the lines of the House that Jack built—"within which teaching, writing and public action are conducted". More explicitly: "In England all political action is conducted in the name of Christianity. The public realm has had a doctrine, and it is this doctrine which has shaped the history of the last century and a half. Almost all of them have had a doctrine about England, whether the subjects they have written or talked about have been English or not. That more limited notion, however, is not what I think I do, though I do not achieve articulation in the present volume. And although what we have here is an examination of the author's relation to the events of which the main work will provide a history, it is a difficult, in the absence of that main work, to have more than an impression of what events are indicated. They lie, clearly, in the field of those religious or political events, the degree of openness of mind which successful apologetics require. The vulgar belief that if they are to subscribe to Christianity, they have to accept some sense of anti-Christianity. What is before the reader is a discussion of thinkers who have helped the author to understand the significance of the history, with which he proposes to deal.

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relationship between religion and society? Or who finds that Enoch Powell demands attention in this volume as he will undoubtedly demand it later? What strange orientation makes Cowling see Churchill's influence on what the English "wished to believe about themselves" as brought about "to a far greater extent through his books" than "by his public presence"?

There is a certain bookishness about Cowling's approach to subjects which call for a wider sensitivity; in the case of Eliot, his understanding of his subject is defective not only through lack of sympathy but through lack of information. It cannot be the case that Eliot "had begun to pick up Maurras" in the 1920s, as "in the thirties he picked up Christopher Dawson, Demant, Mairet, Maurice Reckitt and Karl Mannheim". The influence of Maurras was incomparably more radical than that of the others, and it must date from the year Eliot spent in Paris around 1910. The reference to the "Rev. Maurice Reckitt and the casual allusion to Philip Mairet suggest that Cowling has some more work to do, before his second volume, on the later Eliot's connection with the world of Anglican theology. The real trouble, however, seems to be that, in seeing Eliot primarily as "an influential variant" of a type of Anglicanism—that represented by the Three Anglican Reactionaries—Cowling has missed most of the man, as a curious piece of pontification about the poems shows that he has entirely missed the poet. (The poet he really means to be the pre-war Enoch Powell whose work, registered the resigned, masculine gloom of the Trinity ethos. Perhaps this is unfair, but clumsiness about poetry is significant in the elusive studies Cowling is attempting.)

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